U.S. Department of Labor

Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

SUSTAINABILITY 101:
What Government Funders Look For and How to Provide It

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Watershed in thinking:

Are you seeking "donations" or "investment"?

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Donation-Seekers

- Looking to find generosity and charity
- Meets need of program recipient
- Appeal to heart, primarily using anecdotes and images
- Views funding as an *occasion* for strategic planning
- Tend to focus on process and outputs (i.e. how service are delivered and # served)
- Weak/No outcomes-measures systems
- In response to need, creates services to help people in need

- Generally capable of raising individual contributions
- Seeks funding first

Investment-Seekers

- Looking to find others who share vision
- Meets need of program recipient and donor
- Appeal to heart and mind, using anecdotes, images *and* data
- Views funding as a *result* of strategic planning
- Tend to focus on outcomes (i.e. # of job placements and # of jobs retained after 6 months)
- Strong outcomes-measures systems
- In response to need, identifies real measures of alleviation of need, then design services to maximize positive outcomes
- Generally capable of raising individual contributions and larger scale grants
- Seeks to be *worth of* funding first

Federal Grants: Preparing

- Think years, not tomorrow
- Begin application before SGA/RFP is released
  - WHOFBCI Grants Catalog
  - Prior program announcements
- Read SGA/RFP thoroughly
  - DUNS number/CCR registration requirements
  - Eligibility requirements
- Target application to program objective
- Don't design programs around grants – look for grants that fit your program.
- Collaboration and partnerships strengthen applications

Rules for Successful Applications

- RULE 1: Read the Guidance carefully and follow instructions.

- RULE 2: Match ideas to the funding source and thoroughly understand what the program wants.

- RULE 3: Use the program office for technical assistance and advice.

Rules for Successful Applications

- RULE 4: Begin the necessary groundwork and preparation as soon as possible.

- RULE 5: Develop an internal grant writing work plan with time-framed assignments.

- RULE 6: Follow the instructions and format.

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Rules for Successful Applications

- RULE 7: Complete and sign all required forms.

- RULE 8: Address *all* the review criteria.

- RULE 9: Use data consistently throughout.

- RULE 10: Do not make assumptions. Explain everything, including omissions.

Rules for Successful Applications

- RULE 11: Match budget to scope of project.

- RULE 12: Keep the application simple, reasonable, business-like and professional.

- RULE 13: Prepare to submit **BEFORE** the deadline. Applications must be postmarked or received by a date and time published in the program announcement. Extensions are <u>rarely</u> granted.

Grant Writing Work Plan

Your internal grant writing work plan should:

- Identify an overall Coordinator responsible for assembling the final application package

- Assign each specific section of the application to a responsible person or team

- Establish unbreakable deadlines for completion of each section

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Why Grants Applications are Denied

1. Applicant not eligible
2. Incomplete application (e.g. missing workplan)
3. Not responsive to the guidance
4. Applicant did not understand review criteria
5. Applicant did not propose to take the place of the existing grantee
6. Evidence of inadequate experience or expertise
7. Inconsistent data throughout application
8. Does not show cultural competence to serve the targeted population(s)
9. Unrealistic budget, or budget with errors

Why Grants Applications are Denied

10. Misuse or misunderstanding of key terms or concepts
11. Unrealistic scope of work or work plan
12. Unrealistic assessment of need
13. Does not show willingness to or evidence of meaningful collaborations with other area organizations
14. Application written for an academic or highly professional audience
15. Proposed program inconsistent with mission of organization
16. The application was good but simply out-competed

Thinking Toward a SGA/RFP: Typical Elements of Scoring

I. Description of Community Need

II. History of Effectiveness in Relevant Area

Thinking Toward a SGA/RFP: Typical Elements of Scoring

III. Partnerships and Linkages
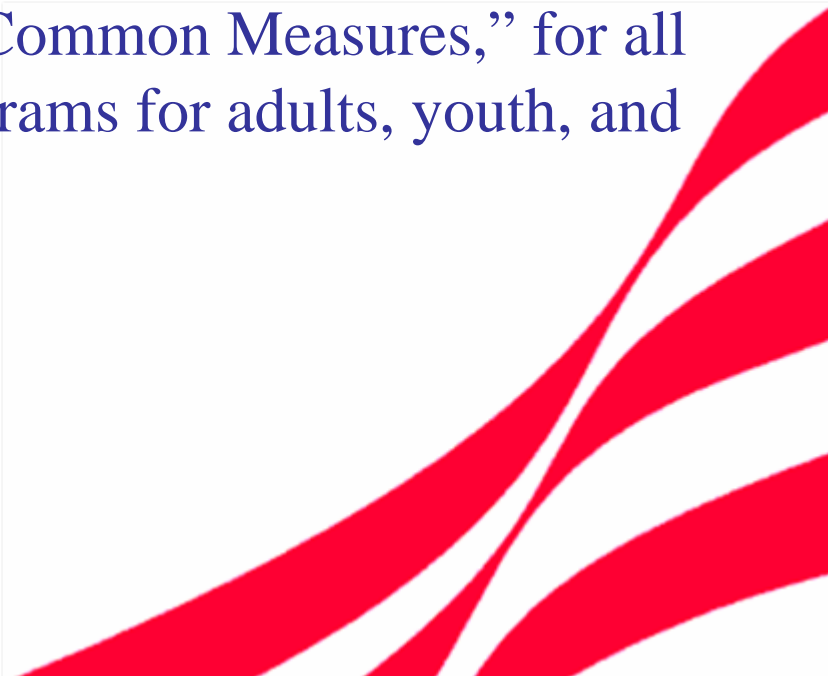## **IV. Strategic Plan, Goals & Timeline**

Thinking Toward a SGA/RFP: Typical Elements of Scoring

V. Framework for Outcome Measurement and Evaluation
VI. Demonstrated Sustainability

Honing in On Measured Outcomes: Example from U.S. Department of Labor

Government, at all levels, focuses on investing in organizations, including faith-based and community-based non-profits, that produce measurable outcomes in people's lives.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has developed common performance measures, or "Common Measures," for all federal employment and training programs for adults, youth, and life-long learning.

Honing in On Measured Outcomes: Example from U.S. Department of Labor

Adult Common Measures

- Entered Employment

- Retention

- Earnings Increase

- Efficiency

**Youth & Life-Long Learning Common Measures**

- Placement in Employment or Education

- Attainment of a Degree or Certificate

- Literacy and Numeracy Gains

- Efficiency

Where the Dollars Are: Example of U.S. Department of Labor

85% of DOL's funds for employment and training services are invested directly in state and local governments through the Workforce Investment System.

15% are used for National programs.

- Other Programs
- State & Local WIBs
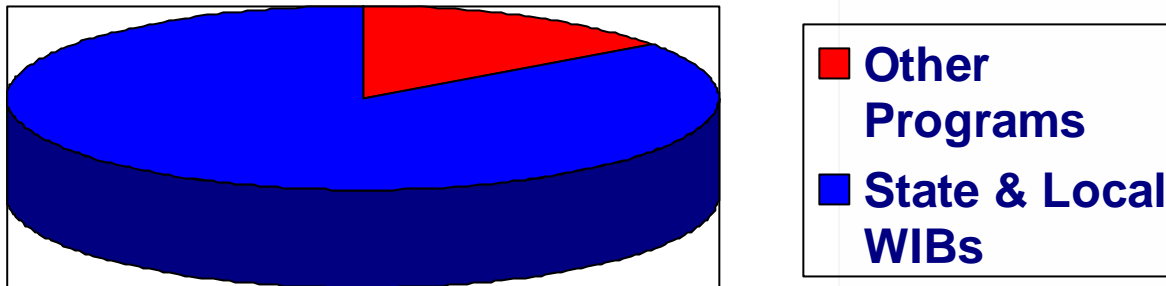
Applying for DOL Grants

✓ Sign-up for grant alerts on the DOL-CFBCI Website [www.dol.gov/cfbci]

✓ Carefully read the Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA) published in the *Federal Register or www.grants.gov* if you are applying for a DOL grant

✓ Reach out to the contact person listed in the SGA if you have questions about eligibility or grant requirements

✓ Decide if the funding opportunity provided by the grant and its conditions align with your organization's capabilities and mission

✓ Visit the DOL-CFBCI Website to access information on writing grant proposals